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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the differences between what advanced and remedial high school readers do while reading a short story. Subjects were three seniors nominated by their literature teachers as being expert high school readers of literature, and three junior level students who were all reading about two grade levels below the junior level according to recent achievement test scores. Subjects were instructed to read the story, doing their best to read it as completely as possible, and saying out loud everything they did in coming to an understanding of the story. The remedial students were given a practice short story in order to become comfortable with speaking their thoughts out loud. A follow-up interview asked the students to tell what the story was about. Results indicated that the advanced readers seemed to understand that reading the story for understanding required building a mental representation of the story that made sense, and that the target operations above were used in the process of building that representation. It is possible that the advanced readers considered themselves knowledgeable enough about literature to make judgments about the worth of a work as literature and that the poor readers did not. (Two tables of data, 15 references, and 3 appendixes of text and data are attached.) (RAE)

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A COMPARISON OF THE MENTAL PROCESSES OF ADVANCED AND REMEDIAL HIGH SCHOOL READERS WHILE READING A SHORT STORY

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This study is an investigation of the differences between what advanced and remedial high school readers do while reading a short story. Helping students understand and respond intelligently to literature is the business of high school literature courses. While many theorists, educators, and researchers have talked a lot about what readers do, how readers succeed or fail, and what should be done to help those who are not successful, little work has been done to empirically investigate the differences between good and poor readers. Knowledge of specific ways in which the activities of these two groups differ while reading a short story will, hopefully, give insight into specific ways that less successful high school readers can be helped.

THEORETICAL BASE AND BACKGROUND

Various theories exist as to what the relationship between authors, texts, and readers is or should be. At one extreme is the theory that the text embodies a message intended by the author, and that the author's intended message is the only defensible interpretation of the text (Richards, 1929; Purves, 1985). At the opposite extreme is the theory that there is no such thing as an author's meaning, but that the text should be treated as a Rorschach blot to which readers attribute meaning according to their own ego structures (Purves, 1985). This study rejects both extreme positions and adopts as a theoretical base Flower's (1987) model of understanding written discourse. Flower's work is based on research into what authors and readers actually do, and she notes that "the writers one observes in the process of composing...clearly have intentions, not to mention designs on the reader. And the readers we have observed in the process of reading spend time trying to infer those intentions" (p. 109). Flower's theory, called the interactive theory, is that both authors and readers view the text as a medium through which the author communicates, at least to some extent, with the reader. According to Flower, the author constructs a mental representation based on his own experiences, beliefs and goals, and instantiates that representation in a text. The reader takes the cues from the text and also builds a mental representation, often trying to build one to match that of the writer. But because the reader has different experiences, beliefs, and goals, the reader's mental representation can only approximate the writer's representation.

Flower notes that readers often have other goals besides constructing a representation that matches that of the author, and that readers' goals are closely related to the reading context. She discusses several familiar goals,

the least sophisticated of which is the paraphrase goal: "Find a stable, single meaning--something you can state in a gist..." (p. 121). While acknowledging that "no one is particularly interested in such interpretations," she also states that "the reader who cannot create gists along the way will probably have difficulty with the larger goals of reading" (p. 121). In this goal, the reader is trying to mentally construct the framework around which the work is built. R.S. Crane's (1953) concept of the formal principle of a work corresponds well to what I believe readers are attempting to construct as they read. Crane viewed a literary work as a concrete whole, in which all elements are unified by the formal principle used by the author in creating the work. The idea is that the author creates a general idea of what the work should be and do, and then tests every element as it is developed against the formal principle. I am suggesting that as readers read, they are attempting to reconstruct the formal principle, the framework around which the story makes sense. I believe that understanding the formal principle of a text is basic to other interpretations. This study is, therefore, designed to investigate the processes by which some students successfully construct the formal principle on which understanding is based, and to compare those processes with those of students who often fail to comprehend even this most basic message of a story.

Assuming, then, that writers have intention and that one task of readers is to comprehend the writer's intent, how do readers come to understand that intent? How do they apprehend contextual clues, and build a mental representation of the formal principle of a work? Research in cognitive science has resulted in a model of the basic mental processes underlying understanding of texts. Spivey (1987) terms the model _constructivism, since both writer and reader are viewed as constructing mental images (as per previous discussion of Flower's model). According to constructivist theory, the reader constructs meaning from textual clues by selecting content on the basis of some principle of importance; by organizing the selected text according to an internalized pattern, or schema, and by connecting content through making inferences and elaborations.

The central feature of the constructivist model is that readers are actively seeking to organize a structure around which the work can be understood (very similar to the idea of constructing a formal principle). The structure is based to some degree on internalized schemata, or abstracted patterns, for events. Many texts "...have typical constituents, and an expected, or canonical, order for the appearance of the constituents" (Spivey, 1987, p. 721). Readers have internalized various abstracted scripts for

story types (e.g., fairy tales, fables, romance novels); even when a story doesn't fit a particular story schema, it may fit one or more schemata of events the reader possesses, and a structure upon which a mental image of the text can be built could be based on such a schema.

The dependence upon inference for understanding a text must be emphasized. Even with texts in which the author is trying to clearly and explicitly portray his or her meaning, the reader has only indirect access through the text to the writer's mental representation. In literary texts more than other types, meaning is often obscured (and, at the same time, revealed) in imagery, symbolism, plot and characterization. Because the reader never has direct access to the writer's mental representation, construction of an approximation of that representation always requires inference, and this is more often true with literary texts than with other, more expository types. The short story used in this study ("The Chaser," by John Collier [1972]; see protocols in Appendix C) requires inference for understanding to a large degree. There are points in the story at which the author connects a part of the story to other parts, allowing the reader to infer meaning that he doesn't explicitly state. The story was chosen so that differences in the ways advanced and remedial students interpret these critical points could be studied.

As successful readers select text, organize it, and make connections in the process of coming to an understanding of the text, they also seem to monitor their cognitive work, recognize difficulty, and apply strategies to correct problems. Cognitive scientists have named this process of self-regulation 'metacognition'. Most researchers divide metacognition into two categories: a) static knowledge about the demands of a task, and b) self-regulation, which involves translating the static knowledge into action (Brown, Armbruster, & Baker, 1986; Garner, 1981; Jacobs & Paris, 1987). An efficient, successful reader knows what must be done in order to understand a story. She has a repertoire of strategies to be used in a variety of reading tasks. As she reads, she plans her mental activity based on her knowledge of what the task requires, evaluates her performance as she reads, and revises strategies when she judges that they have been ineffective. Clearly, self-regulation, the monitoring of one's progress toward constructing a valid mental representation of the text, and knowledge of strategies to apply when one realizes that one has somehow missed the mark, can be invaluable to a reader. It may well be that less successful readers lack in one or both areas of metacognition.

PREDICTED SOURCES OF READING DIFFICULTY

Difficulty in reading is a matter of degree; even the most successful reader experiences difficulty at some moments. For "disabled readers" (Sawyer, 1980), the difficulties are so severe as to prevent comprehension altogether.

Difficulty in reading can derive from variables in the reader or from variables in the text. Readers may have physical impairments in sight or hearing that prevent them from developing language skills necessary for successful reading. However, the subjects in this study do not have such impairments. They show by their taped protocols that they are capable of decoding the print of the story. Their oral reading could even be described as fluent, although, based on achievement test scores, they are reading at least two grade levels below the one at which they are placed. Because they do not suffer from any known physical impairment, that subject will not be treated here.

The previous section described what it is believed successful readers do in order to comprehend text. Failure in any process described would result in difficulty. Based on the constructivist model, then, the following predictions concerning sources of difficulty are made:

1. Schemata. Good readers have a large variety of well-developed schemata related to both literature (Beach & Appleman, 1984) and general knowledge (Sawyer, 1980). Lack of a variety of well-developed schemata with which the current text could be connected would result in difficulty.

2. Selecting. Successful readers use textual clues effectively to select information that is critical to a construction of the author's intended meaning. Failure to discriminate text of critical importance from the remainder would result in difficulty.

3. Connecting. Efficient readers connect parts of the text to infer meaning. They also connect textual elements to their literary and general knowledge. Failure to make critical connections would result in difficulty.

4. Metacognition. Good readers understand demands of a particular reading task and have an adequate repertoire of strategies for meeting the demands. Lack of understanding or appropriate strategies would result in difficulty.

Also, good readers successfully monitor their reading performance and adjust or change strategies when necessary; failure to detect errors in selecting, connecting, or

organizing, or failure to adjust strategies when necessary would result in difficulty.

RESEARCH COMPARING GOOD AND POOR READERS

Although little work has been done to explicate the critical differences between good and poor readers, what has been attempted and accomplished supports the predicted sources of difficulty listed above.

Swain (cited in Purves, 1985) found evidence that good readers reorganize and restructure meaning more than do poor readers. A related finding is that of Letton (1958), who found that the low-scoring group of two sets of ninth graders tended to use the exact words of a poem much more in their responses to questions about the poem than did members of the high-scoring group. These findings support the notion that a critical difference between understanding and lack thereof is the ability to take textual clues and mentally organize them into a structure that makes sense. Seemingly, this cannot be done by simply internalizing the words of the text, but requires that the reader take information from the text and personally organize it into a form that is meaningful for that reader.

Garner (1980 & 1981) found that "poor comprehenders either tend to deemphasize the understanding of what is being read and emphasize instead pronouncing the words correctly or reading fluently, or fail to detect confusion or error as successfully as good comprehenders" (1981, p. 5). This finding supports the idea that understanding of task demands and efficient monitoring of progress while reading are critical differences between good and poor readers.

DESIGN

Kintgen's (1983 & 1985) think-aloud protocol method is used in the study. The method involves audio-taping readers "thinking out loud" as they read a literary work. The rationale is that the researcher will be able to study the thought processes as they occur during the reading. Other methods that have been used to study understanding of literary works involve readers answering questions about the work either orally or in writing after they have read it. Studying mental processes during the act of reading should give a more accurate picture of those processes than any sort of introspection after the fact.

There are limitations to this method, as Kintgen himself notes. The method will undoubtedly interrupt what readers normally do to some extent, since thinking out loud is not the normal way one reads. Also, many mental operations seem to occur below the threshold of awareness,

and therefore are not available for inspection even using the think-aloud protocol. But this is the most adequate methodology developed at this time for researching the mental processes involved in coming to an understanding of a literary work.

After the protocols have been taped, a transcription is made, and the researcher tentatively identifies "elementary operations" of the reader throughout the protocol. An operation can be a word, phrase, clause, or longer unit that seems to express a single cognitive action. According to Kintgen, "this initial segmentation must be relatively impressionistic, simply because there is no isomorphic relation between thoughts and their expressions, and consequently no formal algorithm for analysis. It seems best to treat it merely as a first hypothesis, open to later modification if further analysis requires it" (1985, p. 134). The segments of each protocol are labeled by terms that describe the mental operations indicated. Kintgen (1985) lists 21 categories of elementary mental processes with which he was able to categorize all of the moves of his subjects, who were reading poems. I believe it is significant that several of the processes listed by Kintgen seem descriptive of the processes Spivey believes are critical to understanding written discourse. These categories are SELECT, CONNECT, and GENERALIZE, which seem to correspond well to the selecting, connecting, and organizing that Spivey suggests are necessary for understanding. These moves, therefore, will be singled out for analysis, so that the study will use Kintgen's methodology to test the conclusions of Spivey in her summary of constructivist theory.

Kintgen admits that his list of categories may not be all of the elementary operations readers perform when coming to an understanding of literature, and suggests that researchers add other terms when necessary. Gevinson (1988) modified Kintgen's list for his study of the development of expertise in understanding short stories. I am using Gevinson's modified list with the addition of two of my own: the MONITOR category, for operations that indicate that the reader is regulating his or her reading; and PREDICT, for operations in which subjects project to a further point in the story by predicting future events. (See Appendix C for a complete description of Protocol Analysis Segmenting and Coding Instructions.) Actually, predicting is in one way a special type of connection. If the prediction is accurate, the reader has connected a part of the story to a future part. Even if the prediction does not come to pass, the reader is connecting a part of the story to his or her knowledge of literature or world knowledge in making the prediction. PREDICT could also be thought of as a kind of

DEDUCE, since the reader is deducing consequences of present actions in making a prediction.

After coding of the segments of the protocols was complete, the number of segments in the target categories (SELECT, GENERALIZE, MONITOR, and CONNECT) were tallied for each reader. Also, a qualitative profile was developed for each reader and for the groups of readers (remedial and advanced) based on the protocols.

SUBJECTS

The advanced readers were three seniors nominated by their literature teachers as being expert high school readers of literature. The remedial students were three junior level students who were all reading about two grade levels below the junior level according to recent achievement test scores. These readers were randomly selected from volunteers in a class of remedial students.

THE STORY

"The Chaser" (Collier, 1972; see protocols in Appendix C for text) was chosen for two reasons. First, it is a short short story. Because the analysis of data depends on coding statements readers make while reading the story, a very short story made the analysis manageable. Also, a very short story increased the likelihood that the remedial readers would persist through it.

Second, understanding the formal principle of the story requires inference to a large extent, making possible a comparison of the ways advanced and remedial readers handled making inferences.

Two pieces of information critical to understanding the story (that Alan will tire of Diana's attention and that he will return for the life-cleaner) are never explicitly stated in the story, but there are a multitude of clues that can be used to make the inferences. Some examples:

1. To Alan, the description of Diana's attention sounds like love. But the old man actually describes a possessive, jealous, clinging vine.

2. If the fact that the poison is called a life-cleaner is connected to the notion that Alan will tire of Diana's attentions, the inference may be made that his life will eventually need to be "cleaned" of her.

3. The fact that the prices of the two potions are so drastically different is a clue that the old man knows Alan will be back. He sets him up with the $1 potion to feel the desperate need for the $5000 poison.

4. The following statement of the old man's is vague upon first reading: "If I did not sell love-potions, I should not have mentioned the other matter to you." But a second thought will reveal that the "other matter" must be the poison, because it is the only other matter he has discussed with Alan. So he himself verbally, if vaguely, connects Alan's use of the love-potion with the later use of the poison.

5. The reader gets a final clue in the last five lines of the story to the connection between the love-potion and the inevitability of his later use of the life-cleaner. Consider the text:

> "I can't tell you how grateful I am," said Alan, watching him fill it.
> "I like to oblige," said the old man. "Then customers come back later in life, when they are rather better off, and want more expensive things. Here you are. You will find it very effective."

Obviously, the customer to whom the old man refers is Alan, since he is acknowledging Alan's gratitude. The more expensive item Alan will want is the life-cleaner, which has been so prominent in the story.

This last clue is the most explicit of all. But even if one failed to see the connection here, there are other clues, including the term au revoir at the end, the name, Diana, goddess of hunting noted as the enemy of love in mythology, and, of course, the title, if it is taken to mean a drink taken to follow another as the poison will follow the potion.

PROCEDURE

Subjects were instructed to read the story doing their best to read it as completely as possible, and saying out loud everything they did in coming to an understanding of the story. The remedial readers were given a practice short story in order to become comfortable with speaking their thoughts out loud. After this training, the students were given as much time as they desired to read "The Chaser" in order to understand it. A follow-up interview asked the students to tell what the story was about.

RESULTS

After protocols were transcribed, an independent rater and I each segmented and coded a random sample of one-third of the protocol pages. The coefficients of reliability for both segmenting and coding are given in Table 1.

Table 1. - - Coefficients of Reliability

	Before discussion	After discussion
Segmentation	.80	.94
Coding	.79	.90

Table 2 shows a simple tally of the target operations performed by the different readers. Appendix C includes one of the advanced protocols and one of the remedial protocols. The diagonal marks throughout the protocols indicate the segmentation as agreed upon by the coders. Appendix B includes a listing of sequences of operations made by each of the readers, divided into what seem to me to be logical sequences or patterns of operations for the purpose of analysis.

Table 2 - - Tally of operations performed by readers

	Select	Gener.	Conn: Story	Conn: World	Conn: Lit.	Conn: Pers.	Monitor
Louise	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
Lettie	7	0	0	0	0	0	18
Joe	0	0	2	0	0	4	4
Katie	7	0	1	3	1	5	2
Judd	65	4	2	5	6	2	12
Lara	0	1	0	0	2	0	0

The first thing that must be noted about the protocols is the great variability among them. Each reader seemed to have his or her own style for reading and processing the story. Therefore, I will begin by profiling each reader, then make some tentative comparisons between the groups of advanced and remedial readers.

THE REMEDIAL READERS

Louise. A glance a Louise's "Sequence of Moves" chart (Appendix B) reveals a clear and simplistic pattern. Louise generally read a short passage, then rephrased some part of

the passage into a question. Rarely did she do anything but pose a question. She didn't seem to see the need to HYPOTHESIZE possible deductions, then JUSTIFY, TEST, or QUALIFY them in any way. Once she was through reading the story, she did not attempt to GENERALIZE a meaning. She was simply finished.

Louise's rewording of a sentence of the story into a question is similar to Letton's (1958) finding that lower level readers of poems use exact words of the poem more often than do higher level readers. Several times Louise used the exact words of the story in forming questions even though the resulting questions didn't make sense:

> TEXT: "She'll think you are killed, or that some siren has caught you."
> LOUISE: "I'm thinking, 'What kind of siren would caught you?'"
>
> TEXT: "Oh, yes, they include it. Bountifully. Insistently. Everlastingly."
> LOUISE: "I'm thinking, 'Everlasting. What do they everlast?'"

Louise had no difficulty deciphering the words of the story, but her processing did not seem to go much further than simple deciphering and the simple transformation necessary to make a question from a statement. She seemed unable to connect the ideas in the story to each other or to any general knowledge she possesses.

There were obvious lacunae in Louise's understanding. Her summary of what the story was about indicates that she did not understand it at all. Some of her comments while reading seem to indicate that she did have some awareness that things were not making sense. For example, the above quote about the siren seems to indicate that she might have been wondering about the meaning of the word. But she never got past the questioning stage. She seemed to have no strategies for dealing with her questions. Also, the fact that there were gaps in her understanding did not seem to bother her at all. This is indicated in part by the total lack of MONITOR operations in her protocol, as well as by the fact that once she finished reading the story she was satisfied, even though her many questions were still unanswered.

Lettie. Quite noticeable in Lettie's protocol are her comments about being hungry. I must comment that Lettie read the story during her English period and not during the time she should have been eating lunch. Of course, if her statements about not eating breakfast or dinner the previous evening are accurate, she was probably quite distracted by

hunger. It is also possible, however, that she used the notion of being hungry to cover for her insecurity about being able to successfully come to an understanding of the story.

Lettie's "Sequence of Moves" chart also presents a picture of very simplistic patterns for mentally processing the story. A difference between her protocol and Louise's, however, is the existence of 17 MONITOR operations. Fourteen times she made statements indicating that she knew she was missing some meaning, or that she didn't understand a word. However, only six of those MONITORS were followed by any kind of strategy (usually re-reading). Three MONITORS indicate that she felt she had reached understanding on a local level after applying a corrective strategy.

Like Louise, when Lettie reached the end of the text, she was finished, although there were many unresolved issues in her protocol. Her summary indicates that she didn't understand the story. As a matter of fact, her summary shows that she confused even explicitly stated facts (e.g., the price of the love-potion, which she reports is $5000).

Joe. Joe's protocol shows longer strings of operations after a READ, as well as more of a variety of operations than do Louise and Lettie's protocols. However, Joe, too, read through the story once and considered himself finished, although he raised many questions while reading that were never resolved.

Joe's summary indicates that he built an accurate mental representation of the basic facts that were explicitly stated in the story. Also, Joe stated that he, personally, believed the kind of attention that Diana would pay Alan would be tiresome, but he did not make the critical inference that Alan would find it tiresome. Joe wondered about the inequity of the prices, but, once again, he did not use the clue to make the inference that the old man was using the love-potion to set Alan up to feel the need for the poison, for which he could then demand the exhorbitant price.

THE ADVANCED READERS

Judd. Judd's plan for coming to understand the story was to read the story through once, making a few comments along the way, and then to return and meticulously SELECT and analyze portions of the text sequentially. A pattern can readily be seen in Judd's "Sequence of Moves" chart (Appendix B). A SELECT is followed by a wide variety of operations, then another SELECT followed by a variety of operations, and so on, through the text.

Judd seemed compelled to search for a deeper meaning than he found in the story. His CONNECT:LITERATUREs are used

in expressing personal reactions to the story, and therefore, do not seem to contribute to his understanding of the story.

MONITOR operations are prominent in Judd's protocol. He often made comments such as, "Wait, I'm lost," and, "O.K., I was just getting mixed up." Judd questioned his understanding at all levels (i.e., word, sentence, section, whole). Not only did he realize that there might be a problem with his processing, he also seemed to possess a variety of strategies to use to "get back on track;" a MONITOR move is usually followed by a variety of moves intended to adjust processes to fix a problem.

Katie. Katie began by reading the entire story with no comment. Her protocol consists, then, of comments that she made after reading the story.

Katie's first CONNECT:LITERATURE seems to be of great importance to her understanding. In this operation, she relates "The Chaser" to another story in which "the thing that you truly, truly want in life is the last thing you end up wanting once you have it" (line 9 of protocol, Appendix C). Katie doesn't remember the specific story in which she first encountered this theme. She seems to have abstracted the theme from the particular story so that it is now a general literary theme that she can use as the basis for understanding other stories as well. This CONNECT:LITERATURE implies that the old man's description of Diana was a contributing factor to Katie's understanding the story. Katie obviously understands that Alan will tire of Diana. Because Katie did not comment on the story while reading it the first time, additional insights into her process of making inferences are not possible.

It is difficult to identify a common pattern of operations in Katie's protocol. Several times she SELECTs a passage, then analyzes the passage with a variety of operations. But, unlike Judd, Katie does not SELECT all of the text, and her selections are not sequential. However, one gets the sense from reading her protocol that her thoughts are logical and organized; she is not selecting text at random, but is selecting that which connects to her line of reasoning at the moment.

Prominent features of Katie's protocol are her personal identification with and reaction to ideas in the story, indicated by EVALUATE and CONNECT:PERSONAL operations. She does not begin with questions about the meaning of the story. Instead, she declares that she likes it. Similar EVALUATION statements are sprinkled throughout her protocol. Also, she often expresses personal reaction to ideas in the story (e.g., "It's really sad to admit that we'd be willing to sacrifice someone's life for a certain price of money;" and, "This love-potion, I hate it!"). Although these

statements of personal reaction are quite salient and seem to characterize Katie's style of processing the story, they are not critical to her understanding. Instead, the literary connection she makes in line 9, and her comparison of the prices of the liquids in line 15 and following seem to be where she makes connections that result in her understanding of the story. Although her emotional reactions and value judgments are prominent, they are generally "after the fact" of her understanding.

Lara. The point at which Lara makes the inference that the old man knows Alan's future is quite evident in her protocol. In the last few lines of the story, she interrupts her reading in mid-sentence to interject, "He's going to come back later and get the life-cleaner and kill her." Katie made this inference when the old man acknowledged Alan's gratitude, mentioning once again that customers will return later in life for more expensive things. Other parts of the story may have contributed to the inference, especially the old man's description of Diana's attentiveness. Lara made comments such as, "He's going to hate this," and, "Something bad is going to come of this, I'm sure," as she read this section.

Unlike Judd and Katie, Lara has very little to say after reading the story through once. The few comments she does make essentially consist of a restatement of her inference that Alan will return for the poison, a CONNECT to "Twilight Zone," and an EVALUATE stating that the story has no deeper significance or meaning. Essentially, she uses these comments to justify her belief that she has come to an understanding of the story. I believe it is likely that if she felt she had not completely understood the story she, like Judd and Katie, would have returned to the text for consideration of selected passages.

COMPARISON OF ADVANCED AND REMEDIAL READERS

Although the study involved only six subjects, I will make some tentative generalizations about differences between advanced and remedial readers, specifically in the SELECT, CONNECT, GENERALIZE, and MONITOR operations they performed.

SELECT. The numbers of selections made by advanced and remedial readers present rather conflicting data (see Table 2). Advanced readers made a total of 70 SELECTS, while remedial readers made a total of eight. However, one of the advanced readers made 63 of the 70 total selections, while another made no selections at all. I believe the variation in numbers is due to individual style among readers in processing the story. More important than mere numbers,

however, is the fact that the two advanced readers who made SELECT moves seemed to have had a definite purpose for making the selection, and followed the SELECT with a variety of other operations meant to make deductions, comparisons, qualifications, tests, justifications, and other operations necessary to come to an understanding of the story.

Selections made by remedial readers were not made in order to hypothesize or test deductions. Poor readers followed a SELECT with linguistic operations (WORD, SYNTAX) in order to clarify local level meaning, or with MONITOR, indicating that they realized there were gaps in their understanding. Following a MONITOR, however, the remedial readers gave little indication that they possessed strategies to overcome their difficulty.

CONNECT. The advanced readers made a total of 26 connections to knowledge of literature, general knowledge, or personal experience or values; remedial readers made a total of 8 such connections. The critical difference seems to be in the connections made to world knowledge and to literary knowledge by the two groups. Remedial readers made no such connections; advanced readers made 17. Additionally, the nature of the connections is significant. The advanced readers did not just mention the connection in passing, but elaborated at length on the connections. The difference between the two groups on this point, then, cannot be totally apprehended simply by looking at the quantitative differences; qualitatively, the differences are vast.

Possible reasons that remedial readers did not make these connections are: (a) they do not have the literary or general knowledge schemata to which they can make connections, and/or (b) they are not aware that they should attempt to make such because they would be helpful in understanding the literary work. It is quite possible that the explanation is a combination of these two factors.

GENERALIZE. All three of the advanced readers generalize, relating and connecting more than two elements from the story. Two of the advanced readers (Katie and Lara) clearly demonstrate that they understand the story through their GENERALIZE operations. None of the remedial readers make generalizations of any kind.

MONITOR. Although the number of MONITOR operations performed by remedial readers (22) as compared to the advanced readers (11) would seem to indicate that the remedial students monitor their activities more than do good readers, the nature of the MONITOR moves made by the two groups shows that this conclusion is not justified. Indeed, the remedial readers do seem to often be aware that they are encountering difficulty understanding words or local level meaning. But

they do not follow MONITOR operations with other operations, signifying that they either do not possess strategies to meet the difficulties or are not aware that there is a need to address the difficulty in order to meet the task demands. Quite possibly, the advanced readers make fewer MONITOR moves because they have more general and literary knowledge with which to connect elements of the current work, have broader vocabulary knowledge, and are more successful at making critical connections necessary for inferring unstated meaning. Hence, they encounter fewer difficulties to MONITOR. When they do realize that they are experiencing difficulty, they nearly always follow MONITOR operations with other operations that could be considered attempts to resolve the difficulty.

In sum, the advanced readers seemed to understand that reading the story for understanding required building a mental representation of the story that made sense, and that the target operations above were used in the process of building that representation.

In addition to these findings about the differences between the two groups, other observations seem warranted. First, all of the good readers essentially read through the story once, making few, if any, comments during the first reading. They all made interpretive comments after the first reading, ranging from a few summary sentences by Lara to Judd's seven pages of meticulous reworking. Although there is great variation in what the advanced readers did after they completed reading the story, I believe it is significant that they all considered returning to the text as a viable strategy for reaching an understanding of the story. None of the remedial readers, on the other hand, even seemed to consider the possibility that they might return to the text if they did not have a complete understanding. Once they completed a first reading, they were finished, even though they all had considerably more time available to them, and even though they all had many unanswered questions.

The advanced readers all evaluated the story as a literary work; only one of the remedial readers (Joe) did so. The evaluations of the advanced readers consisted of a statement of evaluation followed by justifications, qualifications, and other operations. Joe's evaluation consisted simply of "Good story." It is possible that the advanced readers consider themselves knowledgeable enough about literature to make judgements about the worth of a work as literature and that poor readers do not.

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Appendix A

Protocol Analysis:

Segmenting and Coding Instructions

(Steve Levinson)

Segmenting: Protocols should be divided into segments within which the reader performs one elementary reading operation or one ancillary process resulting from the protocol-making procedure.

Coding: Each segment should be coded by identifying which of the following processes it represents:

I. Ancillary processes: COMMENT, NARRATE

II. Text identifying processes: READ, SELECT, LOCATE

III. Linguistic operations: WORD, PHONOLOGY, SYNTAX, PARAPHRASE, ELEMENT

IV. Contextualizing operations: DEDUCE, GENERALIZE, CONNECT:STORY, CONNECT:WORLD, CONNECT:HISTORY, CONNECT:LITERATURE, CONNECT:PERSONAL

V. Aesthetic operations: FORM:PART, FORM:WHOLE, EVALUATE

VI. Operations on operations: TEST, JUSTIFY, QUALIFY, SPECIFY

VII. Indeterminate operations: HUH?

Defining characteristics of each process:

COMMENT: Refers to any personal comment the reader may make about the story: what he is doing, where he is, and so forth. Example: "I'm sitting at my desk and not feeling very enthusiastic."

NARRATE: Refers to the reader's explanation or narration of what he is doing: what he says about his thought processes rather than his direct verbalization of them. Example: "I'm going to read the story now as I would to myself."

READ: Refers to the reader's actual reading of the story--all of it or a portion.

SELECT: Refers to the reader's specifying just what part of the text he is working with. Note: READ and SELECT may sometimes coincide.

LOCATE: Refers to the reader's either searching for something in the story or specifying where something is to be found. Examples: "It's back here somewhere," "the railroad tracks in the previous paragraph."

WORD: Refers primarily to looking up or stating the meaning or etymology of the words in the story.

PHONOLOGY: Refers to any comment about the phonology of the story, including rhythm, alliteration, assonance. Quite likely will not occur in these short story protocols since phonology is much more a poetic than a prosaic concern.

SYNTAX: Refers to attempts to unravel any aspect of syntax in the story. Example: "What does that "it" refer to?"

PARAPHRASE: Refers to a very close restatement of what the story says, either by linguistic transformation or substitution of synonyms; refers to an effort to ascertain what the story says, not what it means.

ELEMENT: Refers to any comment about the literary elements of the story (e.g., diction, dialogue, character, incident, imagery, representation, thought).

DEDUCE: Refers to identification of implication of word, phrase, or element of story within contextual frame; often contains such phrases as "suggests," "as if," "there's a sense that," "in a way." [Similar to Hillocks-McCabe's (1984) "simple implied relationship."]

GENERALIZE: Refers to the linking of two or more different story elements and the subsequent effort to establish what they have in common; takes in more elements than a DEDUCE. [Similar to Hillocks-McCabe's "complex implied relationship."]

CONNECT:STORY: Refers to connection of one element in the story to another element in the story. Example: "That 'absinthe' conflict is like what happens with the 'hills like white elephants' comment."

CONNECT:WORLD: Refers to connection of one story element to an aspect of the natural world and/or the way it works.

CONNECT:HISTORY: Refers to connection of one story element to something from history; often this operation is an effort to identify a historical allusion.

CONNECT:LITERATURE: Refers to connection of some aspect of the story to another literary work, an author, or literary history.

CONNECT:PERSONAL: Refers to connection of some aspect of the story to something in the reader's personal experience.

FORM:PART: Refers to interpretation of how the formal elements of the story (e.g., diction, dialogue, character, incident, imagery, representation, thought) relate to some formal principle of the story.

FORM:WHOLE: Refers to any comment about some formal principle or some sense of the whole of the story.

EVALUATE: Refers to assessment of any aspect of the story.

TEST: Refers to assessment or questioning of the validity of a previously identified connection, deduction, generalization, and so on.

JUSTIFY: Refers to explanation, using some sort of evidence, of the validity of a previously identified connection, deduction, generalization, and so on.

QUALIFY: Refers to reducing the scope of or mitigating a previous operation.

SPECIFY: Refers to a more specific restatement of what has just been said.

HUH?: Refers to an interpretation that cannot be tied to anything in the story or to any previous operation; leaves one with the sense that something is missing, that the reader has jumped across operations somehow.

Coding notes:

1) Performing an operation with certainty that one's solution is satisfactory is quite different from performing an operation in a guessing or testing frame of mind. Because hypothesis testing seems to be such an important problem solving process and because several of the above operations often seem to be performed in a hypothetical mode, the coding system ought to be responsive to that. Thus, when a reader shifts to this mode, it will be indicated in the coding by adding ":HYPOTHESIS" to the operation being performed (e.g., DEDUCE:HYPOTHESIS, GENERALIZE:HYPOTHESIS, FORM:WHOLE:HYPOTHESIS, JUSTIFY:HYPOTHESIS).

2) While this coding system seems to be a satisfactory, comprehensive descriptive system for accounting for the kinds of operations readers perform when they read a short story, the system is qualitatively neutral. It does not distinguish between, say, the successful and unsuccessful performance of an operation. A DEDUCE is a DEDUCE is a DEDUCE, and as it stands now there is no way to indicate that one reader's DEDUCtion that, for example, "The girl is happy," is a better reading than another reader's DEDUCtion that "the girl is sad." It would be like coding both 2 + 2 = 4 and 2 + 2 = 5 as ADD and making no further discrimination between them. The problem, of course, in coding a reading protocol qualitatively is in determining what is a successful operation and what is not. If I find enough agreement among the expert readers to establish a clear definition of literary understanding for each story and for the component parts of each story, then one would have, I think, a valid basis for coding subsequent protocols qualitatively as well as descriptively. Given such conditions, one could code for quality by adding one of the following designations to the operation performed: :CORRECT, :INTERESTING, :INTERESTING:INDETERMINATE, :INTERESTING:WRONG, :WRONG.

Additional Operations

PREDICT: Reader projects to a future point in time by deducing consequences of events.

MONITOR: Reader indicates that s/he is regulating his/her reading in some way to facilitate understanding. Could be acknowledgement that s/he lacks understanding, narration of plan to adjust strategy, or comment that changed strategy resulted in understanding. Examples: "Wait, I'm lost;" "O.K., now I understand;" "I'm going to read this section again. I missed something."

Sequence of Moves: Louise (Poor Reader)

read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question / deduce:hypothesize
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / huh? / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question / paraphrase
read / deduce:question
read / deduce / justify
read / test / justify / connect:personal
read / deduce:question / deduce
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / syntax / select / word
read / deduce:question / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / word
read / deduce:question / deduce
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question / deduce / connect:personal
read / deduce:question / deduce
read / deduce:question
read

read / deduce:question
read / connect:word
read / comment / narrate
read / monitor
read / comment / monitor
read / deduce:question
read / monitor / select / monitor
read / monitor:word
read / huh?
read / comment
read / monitor / select / comment
read / deduce / narrate / comment
read / deduce:hypothesize / justify / test
read / comment / specify
read / monitor:word
read / monitor:word
read / word / monitor:word
read / monitor:word / deduce:hypothesize
read / monitor / specify
read / monitor / select / monitor / paraphrase / select
read / deduce / deduce:hypothese / deduce:hypothesize /
deduce:hypothesize / deduce:hypothesize
read / deduce:hypothesize
read / narrate / comment / comment
read / deduce
read / deduce / justify / specify
read / monitor:word / select / deduce:hypothesize
read / monitor:word / deduce:hypothesize
read / deduce / comment
read / deduce:hypothesize / deduce / paraphrase
read / monitor:word
read / select / word / select
read / monitor:word
read / monitor
read / word / narrate / comment

Sequence of Moves: Joe (Poor Reader)

read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question / deduce:hypothesize / deduce:hypothesize
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question / narrate
read / deduce:question / deduce / deduce:hypothesize
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question
read / deduce:question / deduce:question
read / deduce:question / deduce / paraphrase
read / deduce:question / deduce:hypothesize / deduce:hypothesize
read / word:monitor
read / monitor
read / monitor
read / deduce:question / deduce:hypothesize
read / deduce / justify / specify
read / deduce / justify / justify / specify
read / deduce:hypothesize / deduce / connect:story / deduce / justify /
deduce / deduce
read / deduce:hypothesize
read / deduce / deduce
read / connect:personal
read / deduce:hypothesize / justify
read / deduce:hypothesize / connect:personal
read / connect:story / deduce / justify
read / huh?
read / monitor
read / predict
read / predict / justify / specify
read / deduce:question / comment / connect:personal
read / word / evaluate / connect:personal / comment

Sequence of Moves: Katie (Good Reader)

Read (Reads entire story with no comment)
evaluate
connect:personal / specify / specify / quality / specify / comment
evaluate
deduce:question / narrate
connect:literature / deduce / justify
select / comment / paraphrase / specify / paraphrase / deduce / justify /
quality / specify / specify / quality / deduce:question
deduce:question
evaluate / justify / huh? / quality / quality / evaluate / justify
comment / deduce:hypothesize
connect:personal / specify / justify / predict
connect:world / select / paraphrase / connect:personal / specify / justify /
specify / justify / quality / quality / deduce / monitor
select / form:part / specify / deduce:question / paraphrase
select / connect:world / specify / deduce / quality / comment
deduce:question / comment
narrate / connect:world / evaluate / specify / deduce:question / test /
deduce:hypothesize / comment / justify / quality
select / deduce / justify / deduce
select / deduce / select / specify / deduce:question / deduce / evaluate /
connect:personal / comment
select / test / paraphrase
monitor / monitor / narrate
evaluate / specify / connect:story / deduce / deduce / connect:personal
narrate / comment

Sequence of Moves: Judd (Good Reader)

FIRST READING

read / comment / select / deduce
read / evaluate / read / select / evaluate
read / comment / read / monitor / read / monitor / comment / read / evaluate
read / evaluate / huh? / read / evaluate
read / monitor / select / connect:world
read / comment / read / monitor / select / monitor / select
read / comment / read / huh?
read / test / monitor / paraphrase / evaluate / qualify / justify
read / select / word / narrate / connect:world
read / monitor / select / locate
read / select / monitor / read / select / word:hypothesize
read / select / comment / connect:world / read / deduce / deduce:hypothesize / specify / qualify

SECOND TIME THROUGH

narrate / connect:personal / connect:literature / comment
narrate / select / evaluate / specify / justify / specify select / connect:literature / evaluate
select / word / comment / word / word
select / element:question / select / comment / paraphrase / test
select / select / element:question / select / deduce / comment / generalize
comment / paraphrase / deduce
element:question / deduce:hypothesize / test / select / test / select / element:question / comment
select / comment / select / comment / select / generalize / select / element:question / deduce / test / connect:world
select / connect:story / evaluate / select / comment / evaluate / select / specify / deduce / huh? / connect:literature / comment / evaluate / test / justify
select / deduce / select / paraphrase / evaluate
select / evaluate / connect:literature / deduce / qualify
monitor / select / narrate / form:part / word / deduce:hypothesize / test / huh? / select / deduce

select / deduce / test / connect:world / test / specify / deduce:question / deduce:hypothesize / paraphrase / deduce
select / huh? / deduce / monitor
select / select / connect:story
select / form:part / select
monitor / select / deduce
select / deduce
select / deduce / specify
select / deduce / comment / select / specify
select / select / comment
select / deduce
select / deduce / deduce:hypothesize
select / deduce:hypothesize / test
select / specify / deduce / deduce / narrate
select / evaluate
select / generalize / evaluate
select / comment
select / connect:literature
select / paraphrase / select / monitor
select / deduce:question
select / comment / select / monitor / deduce:question / deduce:hypothesize / connect:personal
select / deduce / specify / evaluate
select / word / test
select / deduce / qualify / select / deduce:hypothesize / deduce
select / specify / deduce:hypothesize / deduce:hypothesize
select / narrate / paraphrase
select / deduce
select / word
select / deduce:question / deduce:hypothesize / test / evaluate / connect:literature / test / justify / test
select / word / specify / qualify / narrate / word
select / comment / narrate / select / select / monitor / huh? / select / deduce / deduce:hypothesize / connect:literature / evaluate
narrate / comment
comment / comment / evaluate / qualify / connect:literary
select / word / deduce

huh?
monitor / evaluate
comment / monitor
select / deduce:? / qualify / narrate / generalize / generalize:
hypothesize / test / evaluate / narrate / comment

Sequence of Moves: Lara (Good Reader)

read / deduce
read / deduce
read / deduce:question
read / predict
read / huh?
read / predice
read
generalize / comment / specify / evaluate
evaluate / comment / evaluate / justify
connect:literature / specify / evaluate / predice / comment

Appendix C

Protocol for Joe (Poor Reader)

Alan Austen, as nervous as a kitten, /**Hm. Why was he nervous is what I'm wondering.**/went up certain dark and creaky stairs in the neighborhood of Pell Street, /**What was he in? An abandoned house? Apartment building?**/ and peered about for a long time on the dim landing before he found the name he wanted written on one of the doors. /**Why did he write the name on a door?**/

He pushed open this door, as he had been told to do. /**Who told him to do this?**/**That's what I'm wondering.**/ and found himself in a tiny room, which contained no furniture but a plain kitchen table, a rocking chair, and an ordinary chair. /**I'm wondering who lived there.**/**Somebody had to live there.**/**Or else he may just be hanging out there or something.**/On one of the dirty, buff-colored walls were a couple of shelves, containing in all perhaps a dozen bottles and jars. /**What were these bottles for?**/

An old man sat in the rocking chair, reading a newspaper. /**I'm wondering who this old man is.**/ Alan, without a word, handed him the card he had been given. /**I'm wondering what the card is**/**and why he was given it.**/ Sit down, Mr. Austen," said the old man very politely. "I am glad to make your acquaintance." /**I'm wondering how the kid had the card,**/**and it told him to give it to the old man.**/**And he's just meeting him for the first time.**/

"Is it true," asked Alan, "that you have a certain mixture that has--er--quite extraordinary effects?"

"My dear sir," replied the old man, "my stock in trade is not very large--I don't deal in laxatives and teething mixtures--but, such as it is, it is varied. I think nothing I sell has effects which could be precisely described as ordinary." /**I'm thinking what he's selling.**/**It sounds like drugs or something.**/**He might be a drug dealer.**/

"Well the fact is--" began Alan.

"Here, for example," interrupted the old man, reaching for a bottle from the shelf. "Here is a liquid as colorless as water, almost tasteless, quite unpercepuble in coffee. /I don't know what that is,/ milk, wine, or any other beverage. It is also quite unpercepuble to any known method of autopsy." /I don't understand none of that,/ But it sorta sounds like maybe it's a drug that can't be traced or seen in any mixture of water or anything./

"Do you mean it is a poison?" cried Alan, very much horrified.

"Call it cleaning fluid if you like," said the old man indifferently. "Lives need cleaning. Call it a spot-remover. 'Out, damned spot!' Eh? 'Out, brief candle!'" /I don't understand that part either. I don't know what he's talking about./

"I want nothing of that sort," said Alan.

"Probably it is just as well," said the old man. "Do you know the price of this? For one teaspoonful, which is sufficient, I ask five thousand dollars. Never less! Not a penny less." /I'm wondering what this kid's trying to do./ I wonder if he's trying to kill somebody or something./

"I hope all your mixtures are not as expensive," said Alan apprehensively.

"Oh, dear, no," said the old man. "It would be no good charging that sort of price for a love-potion, for example. /This kid must be in love with somebody,/ if he wants to go spend money./ He must really like the chick./ Young people who need a love-potion very seldom have five thousand dollars. If they had they would not need a love-potion." /This guy--this old man--must be pretty smart/ if he knows how to make a love-potion/ or things that kill somebody with no traces and stuff./ Poison for $5000;/ he must be pretty smart./

"I'm glad to hear you say so," said Alan.

"I look at it like this," said the old man. "Please a customer with one article, and he will come back when he needs another. Even if it is more costly. He will save up for it, if necessary." /Sounds like he's just a businessman./ He needs money./ Doesn't look like from what I read before that he lives wealthy./ And he has all this stuff and he charges large prices;/ he should be living wealthy,/ but it doesn't look like he does--sound like he does./

"So," said Alan, "you really do sell love-potions?"

"If I did not sell love-potions," said the old man, "I should not have mentioned the other matter to you. It is only when one is in a position to oblige that one can afford to be so confidential." /He sounds like he can be a very careful man in what he deals with./

"And these potions," said Alan. "They are not just--just--er--"

"Oh, no," said the old man. "Their effects are permanent, and extend far beyond the mere carnal impulse. But they include it. Oh, yes, they include it. Bountifully. Insistently. Everlastingly." /Sounds like it's a pretty good potion./ You get your money's worth./

"Dear me!" said Alan, attempting a look of scientific detachment. "How very interesting!"

"But consider the spiritual side," said the old man.

"I do, indeed," said Alan.

"For indifference," said the old man, "They substitute devotion. For scorn, adoration. Give one tiny measure of this to the young lady--its flavor is imperceptible in orange juice, soup, or cocktails--and however gay and giddy she is, she will change altogether. She'll want nothing but solitude, and you." /Sounds like I could use some of this stuff, too./

"I can hardly believe it," said Alan. "She is so fond of parties."

"She will not like them anymore," said the old man. "She'll be afraid of the pretty girls you may meet."

"She'll actually be jealous?" cried Alan in a rapture. "Of me?"

Interviewer: Tell me about the story:

It was about a kid that went to I guess an old man, like a wizard, must have been a wizard or something. He made these sort of potions. He wanted to buy a love-potion for his girl. And he ended up telling him about spot-removers, which was poison that he had for a lot of money, $5000. And he told him how the love-potion would make her totally devoted to him. Whatever he did she would want to know. To me it sounded like she'd be a burden and all this stuff. Like a mother. Just like a mother. This kid's thinking that this must cost a lot of money 'cause everything else is like $5000. Ended up it only cost him a dollar. The old man figured he'd give them a good price 'cause later on in life they'd come back for more things and stuff.

So, what was the reason the author wrote this story?

I think it sounds more like a fantasy than...that you could buy some...get somebody's love for just a dollar. I don't think it'd never happen.

It's interesting that you say that the young man sounded like that was just what he wanted, but in your mind it sounded like it would be a burden.

After a while he'd probably get sick of it.

The Chaser, by John Collier. **(Reads entire story with no comment.)**(Ooh. I like it. I do/God. I don't know if I could live my life with having someone that possessive of me/I don't think I would ever want that, not even for a dollar. That's just too bizarre./To have someone love me, yes, I can understand/But not jealous, not worried and not terrified, and not...I want to say, I guess, almost slavish./No, I would not want that in a relationship./But, beyond the point,/I love this story./I wonder what it is about the love potion./Anyway, no, that's not what I'm thinking about./What it reminds me of is a story that I heard once, was it maybe...I don't remember, I think it might have been Greek mythology or something like that, where the one thing that you truly, truly desire in life is the last thing you end up wanting once you have it./Which is probably why this old man sells something like the life-cleaning potion;/it's the only way to get rid of the effects of the other one, seems to me./This price, it's somewhat curious./I don't know if it just interests me,/but $5000 for a life,/to take someone's life,/but only a dollar to have them completely alter their lifestyle and change you, to suit your every whim and to fall madly, madly in love with you./And isn't it basically the same thing?/I mean, you're killing them in one respect, but you kill their spirit and their personality in the other with the love potion, where they can't even think about anything but you/I wouldn't call that exactly a life/Complete obsession; that's what it is./You kill their old self and change them into what you want,/or what you think you want at the time/What you think you want for a dollar. I wonder if he would have bought it if it were more expensive, say if it were, maybe not 5000, but 500, or 600, or even

"Yes, she'll want to be everything to you."

"She is already. Only she doesn't care about it."

"She will, when she has taken this. She will care intensely. You'll be her sole interest in life." /**Sounds like it'd be kinda--how do you say?--hm...a bother./ You know, he's got to worry about her, and she'll be on you all the time. Like she might be a burden when she's always with you and she's always jealous and stuff.**/

"Wonderful!" cried Alan.

"She'll want to know all you do," said the old man. "All that has happened to you during the day. Every word of it. She'll want to know what you are thinking about, why you smile suddenly, why you are looking sad."

"That is love!" cried Alan.

"Yes," said the old man. "How carefully she'll look after you! She'll never allow you to be tired, to sit in a draft, to neglect your food. If you are an hour late, she'll be terrified. She'll think you are killed, or that some siren has caught you." /**Sounds like your ma!/I'd hate to have a ma again when you're older.**/

"I can hardly imagine Diana like that!" cried Alan, overwhelmed with joy. /**I think he's overlooking things that he's just said./How could you want somebody that'd watch your every move and check up on you?**/

"You will not have to use your imagination," said the old man. "And, by the way, since there are always sirens, if by any chance you should, later on, slip a little, you need not worry. She will forgive you, in the end. She'll be terribly hurt, of course, but she'll forgive you--in the end." /**That'd be all right if you always have her.**/

"That will not happen," said Alan fervently.

"Of course not," said the old man. "But, if it does, you need not worry. She'll never divorce you. Oh, no! And, of course, she herself will never give you the least, the very least, grounds for--not divorce, of course--but even uneasiness." /**Didn't understand the last line.**/

"And how much," said Alan, "how much is this wonderful mixture?"

"It is not so dear," said the old man. /**I would think it would be dear if it makes all this./I'd be selling it for big money.**/ "as the spot-remover, as I think we agreed to call it. No. That is five thousand dollars; never a penny less. One has to be older than you are to indulge in that sort of thing. One has to save up for it." /**I would think that you'd have to save up for the love-potion, too./Sounds even better than the poison./Or spot- remover, as they call it.**/

"But the love-potion?" said Alan.

"Oh, that," said the old man, opening the drawer in the kitchen table and taking out a tiny, rather dirty-looking phial. "That is just a dollar." /**I don't see how all that can be just a dollar./That's pretty interesting./I wish I--I'd buy a lot of them and sell them for more.**/

"I can't tell you how grateful I am," said Alan, watching him fill it.

"I like to oblige," said the old man. "Then customers come back, later in life, when they are rather better-off, and want more expensive things. Here you are. You will find it very effective."

"Thank you again," said Alan. "Good-bye."

"*Au revoir*," said the old man. /**I guess that means "good-bye" and "see you again"./Good story./I wish I knew somebody like that. I'd buy them phials and sell them for big money. Love-potions./The end.**/

1000. Is her love still that important to him?/I also wonder how he heard about this man./I love the description in the opening./It's just so clear, you can just see everything that's going on./He never really describes either of the people,/except that Alan is as nervous as a kitten and that the man was old./I think it's almost better/you can almost visualize in your own mind what you want them to look like/ and... You know I... You know my concentration isn't a hundred per cent right now./But I have a feeling that this old man has sold the love potion before and knows that once people have it and give it to someone, that they always come back for his life cleaner./This love potion, I hate it!/I mean, I even hate the thought of it./The one thing that Alan admires about Diana is her, the way she is, the way she acts, her personality as it is. Giving her this potion is just going to completely change her./I bet anything that he's not going to like her anymore./The thing this also reminds me of is, like, all the wonderful effects all these miracle drugs are supposed to have. Completely alter your life for fifty cents./But, his one comment, Alan's one comment, "That is love!" after the old man has just described that "she will want to know all you do and all that has happened during the day and every word of it. She will to know what you are thinking about, why you smile suddenly, why you are looking sad."/Alan calls that love./That's not love; that's adoration./That's obsession, maybe,/but love is two ways./He has to care equally about her./And love is also accepting some limitations,/or trying to overcome them together,/or, you know, just accepting that your partner isn't perfect, but still loving them for the things that they are./He can't do that, so he's going to change her, and make her

perfect./ I don't know about this. Let me think here./ "...imperceptible to any known method of autopsy."/I think it's quite interesting that he describes the life cleaner before he goes into his love potion and getting Alan's interest that way./That way first./And I wonder how he knew that Alan wanted a love potion,/because right after that, right after the old man describes the glove cleaner, he goes on to describe the love potion./"Look at it like this," said the old man. "Please a customer with one article and he will come back when he needs another, even if it is more costly. He will save up for it if necessary."/That's real, real true of humans, most of us./You do anything you can to get what you want./Well, Alan is there in the first place to get what he wants, which is Diana to love him,/or be completely infatuated with him./I want to know how the old man./excuse me,/I want to know how the old man gets his potion to work on the spiritual side./Another question of curiosity. Um (pause)/I just have a couple of ideas running through my head at the same time, and I'm not making much sense of either of them./One, I don't know, I just, I know it's true, but it's really sad to admit that we'd be willing to sacrifice someone's life for a certain price of money just so we can get what we wanted. And I guess a lot of people do it a lot of the time; however, that's, of course, a cynical view of the world./Well, maybe I just, I can't agree with buying love/ buying someone's soul is basically what it is./I wonder if the old man./no../ Maybe he's the devil./That'd be real interesting./Make a deal with the devil. Be willing to pay whatever price you wanted to get out of it. Just $5000./"You will be her sole interest in life."/God! Ugh! What an awful life!/With nothing but that one man, or nothing about

anything except what he's doing (?) he's O.K. How many times he brushed his teeth that day/I can hardly imagine Diana like that/"You will not have to use your imagination."/It just kills everything. And this thing about if you should ever...ever slip off and find someone else, the fact that Diana would always forgive him in the end/That's what I like, "She will forgive you in the end."/How soon will the end be if this works out?/It's almost like he turns her into a mindless, mindless groupie almost/That's my one criticism against it,/is that I believe that love is anything but mindless/I mean, I'm just a dreamer; who knows? (sigh) (pause)/"I like to oblige...expensive things."/Well, I guess that is true/Give good service, chances are you're more willing to pay for it even if it is more expensive/I don't know. I don't know if I've got much more to say about this./I think I may be missing something that's like a thread that's running deeper through it./But, I don't know. The way I'm looking at it right now, I can't tell if it's just simplistic or if I'm just pulling up all the obvious facts./Let me think about this maybe for a little while longer./(?) interesting, (?) to the tape./I can't believe that this man would really want this,/to kill the one he really loves. The same stuff that the glove cleaner is./And he can still do whatever he wants./He never talks about loving her. He simply wants her to love him./That's pretty sad./I don't know, I want to think about this a little more;/maybe I can come up with something else.

Summarize briefly what you think the story is about.

O.K. A man is looking for some way to get this woman to love him. And he hears about...his first name is Alan. He hears about this old man who supposedly sells these drugs that will do whatever you want, or do specific things. And one of the things that he sells is a love potion. So he goes to the man and buys...hears a story first about a life cleaner. And then he buys the love potion and leaves. A basic plot summary is what that was. What I really think it's about? Well, it struck me as funny that the old man would tell him first ...well, no, I'll save that. What I really think it's about is how we buy things just because we can't have them. We're willing to pay a price to ruin someone else so we can have what we want. The love potion will change Diana, the woman, to something completely different from what she is right now. And he's willing to sacrifice her just so he can get her undying devotion for him. That's what it was about.